

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8408
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION GENEVA

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PASS AGRICULTURE ELECTRONICALLY
PARIS ALSO FOR USOECD
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, EEC
SUBJ: EC CROP ESTIMATES FOR 1978

REF: BRUSSELS 13161

1. SUMMARY: THE EC STATISTICAL OFFICE ESTIMATES THAT THE 1978 GRAIN HARVEST WILL APPROACH THE RECORD LEVEL OF 108 MILLION TONS. WHEAT PRODUCTION IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE TO 42 - 42.5 MILLION TONS WHILE PRODUCTION OF OTHER GRAINS IS EXPECTED TO BE ABOUT THE SAME AS LAST YEAR. AREA PLANTED TO SUGARBEETS AND POTATOES IS DOWN. END SUMMARY.

2. THE EC STATISTICAL OFFICE HAS JUST RELEASED A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE 1978 HARVEST. THE REPORT ESTIMATES THAT IF WEATHER CONDITIONS REMAIN FAVORABLE THE 1978 GRAIN HARVEST SHOULD APPROACH THE RECORD HARVEST UNCLASSIFIED

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OF 108 MILLION TONS REALIZED IN 1974. (1977 GRAIN PRODUCTION TOTALLED 103.7 MILLION TONS). THE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN GRAIN PRODUCTION IS DUE PRIMARILY TO AN ANTICIPATED INCREASE IN THE WHEAT HARVEST -- NOW ESTIMATED AT 42 TO 42.5 MILLION TONS AS COMPARED WITH 38.5 MILLION TONS IN 1977. THE AREA PLANTED TO WHEAT HAS INCREASED BY 8 PERCENT THIS YEAR. THE HARVEST OF BARLEY, CORN AND OTHER

GRAINS IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM LAST YEAR'S LEVEL. WITH RESPECT TO OTHER CROPS, A 5 PERCENT DECREASE IN THE AREA PLANTED TO POTATOES IS NOTED; THE AREA PLANTED TO SUGARBEETS IS DOWN 2 PERCENT. THE REPORT ALSO NOTES THAT IN LARGE AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY THE HARVEST OF HAY HAS BEEN DAMAGED BOTH IN TERMS OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY BY EXCESSIVE RAIN.

2. THE REPORT GIVES NO FURTHER ESTIMATES WITH RESPECT TO COMMUNITY-WIDE PRODUCTION FOR 1978. HOWEVER, IT DOES GIVE ADDITIONAL DATA ON A COUNTRY BY COUNTRY BASIS. COUNTRY BY COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS ARE GIVEN IN SUBSEQUENT PARAGRAPHS.

3. GERMANY: THE AREA PLANTED TO GRAINS IS SET AT 5.3 MILLION HECTARES, ABOUT THE SAME AS LAST YEAR. ASSUMING NORMAL WEATHER CONDITIONS, THE RECORD HARVEST OF 22.65 MILLION TONS ATTAINED IN 1974 COULD BE SURPASSED. THE CONDITION OF THE POTATO AND SUGARBEET CROPS IS CONSIDERED NORMAL; HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF REDUCTIONS IN AREA OF ABOUT 9 AND 3 PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY, SOME DECREASE IS EXPECTED IN PRODUCTION OF THESE CROPS.

4. FRANCE: THE AREA PLANTED TO GRAINS IS SET AT 7.9 MILLION HECTARES, ONLY SLIGHTLY BELOW LAST YEAR. WHEAT PRODUCTION IS ESTIMATED AT 18 MILLION TONS, AND BARLEY PRODUCTION AT 10.3 MILLION TONS. THE AREA IN POTATOES IS UNCLASSIFIED

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SLIGHTLY BELOW LAST YEAR'S LEVEL; THE HARVEST OF EARLY POTATOES IS ESTIMATED AT 0.51 MILLION TONS AS COMPARED WITH 0.59 MILLION TONS IN 1977. THE AREA PLANTED IN SUGARBEETS AND FORAGE BEETS IS DOWN BY 4 AND 2 PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY.

5. ITALY: THE AREA IN WHEAT IS ESTIMATED AT 3.49 MILLION HECTARES, UP FROM 2.8 MILLION HECTARES IN 1977. PRODUCTION OF SOFT WHEAT IS ESTIMATED AT 5.56 MILLION TONS; DURUM WHEAT PRODUCTION IS ESTIMATED AT 3.2 MILLION TONS. THE CORN HARVEST IS EXPECTED TO BE NEAR 6 MILLION TONS (1977, 6.4 MILLION TONS). THE AREA IN POTATOES IS ESTIMATED TO BE DOWN 5 TO 10 PERCENT; PRODUCTION OF EARLY POTATOES IS ESTIMATED AT 0.34 MILLION TONS AS COMPARED WITH 0.36 MILLION TONS IN 1977. THE AREA IN SUGARBEETS IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER THAN 1977 AND A SUGARBEET PRODUCTION OF 11 MILLION TONS IS EXPECTED. TOBACCO PRODUCTION IS EXPECTED TO BE ABOUT THE SAME AS LAST YEAR.

6. BENELUX: THE AREA PLANTED IN GRAINS, POTATOES AND SUGARBEETS IS EXPECTED TO BE ABOUT THE SAME AS LAST YEAR IN THE NETHERLANDS. THE CONDITION OF WINTER GRAINS IS

CONSIDERED GOOD, THAT OF SUMMER GRAINS VARIABLE, WHILE THE CONDITION OF POTATOES, SUGARBEETS AND FORAGE BEETS IS CONSIDERED TO BE GOOD TO VERY GOOD. IN BELGIUM THE AREA IN GRAINS IS DOWN SLIGHTLY FROM LAST YEAR. COLD AND RAINY WEATHER IS EXPECTED TO RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN WINTER WHEAT AND BARLEY PRODUCTION.

7. UNITED KINGDOM: THE AREA IN WINTER WHEAT IS UP 15 TO 20 PERCENT WHILE THAT OF BARLEY HAS INCREASED SLIGHTLY. ASSUMING GOOD WEATHER CONDITIONS, GRAIN PRODUCTION IN ENGLAND AND WALES COULD SET A NEW RECORD OF ABOUT 14.8 MILLION TONS. THE CONDITION OF POTATOES AND SUGARBEETS IS CONSIDERED GOOD. THE AREA PLANTED TO SUGARBEETS IS 4 PERCENT HIGHER THAN LAST YEAR.

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8. IRELAND: DESPITE AN INCREASE IN AREA, THE GRAIN

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HARVEST IS EXPECTED TO BE ONLY 1.7 MILLION TONS. RAINY WEATHER HAS RESULTED IN THE APPEARANCE OF PLANT DISEASES.

9. DENMARK: ALTHOUGH THE AREA IN GRAINS HAS INCREASED BY 1 PERCENT, PRODUCTION IS EXPECTED TO BE ONLY 6.7 TO 6.8 MILLION TONS AS COMPARED WITH 7.3 MILLION TONS IN 1977, DUE TO THE LACK OF PRECIPITATION. THE AREA IN POTATOES HAS DECLINED BY 5 PERCENT, WHILE THAT IN SUGAR-BEETS HAS GONE DOWN BY 4 PERCENT.

10. 1977 HARVEST: THE REPORT ALSO CONTAINS REVISED ESTIMATES OF THE 1977 HARVEST. HOWEVER, ONLY VERY SLIGHT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE ESTIMATES REPORTED IN THE REFTEL. THE TOTAL 1977 GRAIN CROP IS NOW ESTIMATED AT 103.687 MILLION TONS AND THE BARLEY CROP AT 37.75 MILLION TONS. THE TOBACCO CROP IS NOW ESTIMATED AT 173.1 THOUSAND TONS. THE REPORT ALSO ESTIMATES 1977 UNCLASSIFIED

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OILSEEDS PRODUCTION AT 1.2 MILLION TONS; PREVIOUS REPORTS DID NOT INCLUDE AN ESTIMATE OF OILSEEDS PRODUCTION.
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